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OLD AND NEW



W. E. Parnes
Feb 11/95



OLD
AND NEW
a
collection of
poems by
ERNEST RADFORD

T. FISHER UNWIN
LONDON
1895



PR 5205
R4304

Edinburgh : T. and A. CONSTABLE, Printers to Her Majesty

PREFACE

Translations from Heine and other verses.

Cambridge, 1882.

Measured Steps. London, 1884.

Chambers Twain. London, 1890.

THESE three volumes were issued at my expense. They can hardly be said to have been 'published' in the more liberal sense of the word. Therefore I feel no shame in accepting an invitation to reprint what I believe to be the best of them, and I am even eager to do so, as it gives me an opportunity of revising my work.

From these—from the two books of 'The Rhymers' Club,' and from a pile of new verses, I have taken the poems which

form the present 'collection.' I have only to acknowledge the kindness which permits me to reprint the verses on p. 94 and p. 122 . . . Now am I rid of dull care. The delight of the poet who discovers in a friend so reckless a publisher can be better imagined than described.

E. R.

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PART I
FROM THE VOLUME OF 1882

*A cold-blooded, laggard, worrying hunt after rhymes
which can be made serviceable. . . .*

O. W. HOLMES : '*Over the Teacups.*'

WHITE LIES

COULD I be young as I once was young—
 Young, body and heart, again :
 Could you but be fair as you once were fair
 (But wishing, ah me! is vain) ;
 There were happiness now that we missed
 somehow
 In days that ended in pain.

Could I but love as once I loved
 In old old days that are sped :
 Could you but be true as I thought you
 true
 Ere trust in my heart was dead ;
 There were still to know, in place of woe,
 Ah me, what a joy instead !

But I may not love as I loved in youth,
 Nor trust as I trusted then ;

Nor beauty is yours, nor the little of truth
That you brought to the sons of men :
There is nothing to mend, and here must
 end
My song—but I loved you then !

READER TO NOVELIST

I HOLD it not the wisest plan
To make your hero out a man
For ever in the right,
And so alarmingly endowed
With virtue that an average cloud
(Or, if you better like it, spout)
Of envy, defamation, spite
Can scarce obscure, and can't put out,
His flickering candle-light.
Your novel-writer, not content
With average stature, 5 feet 9,
And morals such as have to serve
Mere men of God's design,
Seeks grand, chryselephantine, men
Whose strength is as the strength of ten,
Of beauty half divine.

Dear novelist, unto me list ;
I'd sooner death than with a breath
Of mine
Malign
This paragon of excellence
This 'moral porcupine.'
But think how short is actual life,
Docked by old Time's pruning-knife,
How *long* your last romance is !
And think how brief would be *your* course
Had you the brilliant chances
You give your hero every day
To fall before resistless force,
Or slighted love, or dull remorse,
Or suicidal fancies.

The modern novel, I submit,
There's very much too much of it.
And all, I think, because
You give your hero such *physique*,
He's tougher than the toughest Greek,
(You couldn't kill him in a week !)
He scoffs at Nature's laws.
And then again, so fair a vein
His whole existence hallows,
It were insane to rack one's brain

In hope to lure this creature pure
Beyond his moral shallows,
Or catch him in one little sin,
Precursor of the gallows.

For human nature's daily food
He's much too strong and much too good.

THE ANSWER

SUPPOSE, dear Reader, I should choose,
By old tradition undeterred,
Some hero from the common herd
And ask the public to peruse

The story of a life that moved
For ever in a midway track,
With little record at the back
Of Vice detected, Virtue proved

(As may be thine), were it a thing
To marvel at if in an hour,
Lulled by its soporific power,
I found thee, reader, slumbering?

CAMBRIDGE ROWING, 1874-8

It's vastly engaging
 When a snowstorm is raging,
 And a hurricane shrieks
 Thro' shadowy brecks,
 To loaf by the river
 And grumble and shiver
 Until the boat-captain,
 His 'ulster' well wrapt in,
 Appears on the scene.

And when we are ready,
 The 'ship' isn't steady,
 The water is 'heady,'
 The 'work' is oppressive,
 The captain aggressive,
 And swearing like mad
 By everything bad—
 Eternally slanging
 The writer for 'hanging,'
 For 'sugaring,' 'cocking,'
 Or 'knifing,' or 'rocking'—

And when a boat-captain,
His dignity wrapt in,
Develops his views
Bad language ensues.

I'll endeavour to paint,
In portraiture faint,
The pleasures of rowing ;
Commencing by showing
The style of oration
The youth of this nation
Requires to inflame
His yearning for Fame,
And will offer it thee
In paraphrase free,
Replacing by dashes
Such language as clashes
With prevalent notion
Of verbal emotion.

(CAPTAIN'S ADDRESS FROM THE TOWING-PATH.)

Get her ready !
Forward ! Row !
Keep her steady !
Let her *go* !
Now she's strolling !
Sit up ! Bow !

You are ròlling
 Like a cow!
 Now then, D——N it!
 Blazes, Two!
 Try to *lamm* it
On, man, *do*!
 Feel your strètchers!
 Curse you, Three!
 (Can't you splash it
 Over me?)
 Swing togethèr
 Every oar!
 Off the feàther
 Sooner, Four!
 Keep your bàcks up!
 Look àlive!
Where d'you hope to
 Go to, Five?
 (Go to Heaven?
 Go to H—ll!)
 Six, you 're cocking!
 Seven, you 're làte!
 Shocking, shocking,
 Ghastly Eight!¹

¹ Referring, of course, to the whole crew, and not to the 'stroke' of the boat.

Keep it gòing !
Nèver saw
D-mnder rowing !
E-A-S-Y all.

Why should I continue ?
'Tis surely not in you
To list any longer
To language no stronger
Than dash it, or d——n it,
And yet if I cram it
With oaths better suited
To please the polluted
I fear some ill fame
May attach to my name ;
For I often aspire
In poetry higher,
And care not to venture
Incurring the censure
Of scandalised readers
In eloquent 'leaders,'
For I shrewdly suspect
They would rise and reject
And spurn and resent all,
With anger prodigious,
My songs sentimental,
My epics religious.

AN EXHORTATION

‘The spectacle of an entire nation grovelling in contentment is an exasperating thing.’—MARK TWAIN.

So many battles still unfought,
 So many eager to be taught,
 So many preachers prone to preach,
 That mere plenitude of thought
 Strikes poverty on speech?
 Or tell me, fellow Interchangers,¹
 Must we henceforth meet as strangers?
 See with mutual resentment
 Nothing mutual in our views?
 Do you ‘grovel in contentment’?
 Is there nothing to make better?
 Is there nothing to abuse?
 Is not the army ‘standing’?
 Is not monarchy a sham?
 Is not Beaconsfield in office?
 Do not tin tacks in the jam

¹ These lines were first circulated in manuscript in a magazine called *The Interchange*.

Arouse your indignation?
Nor the nauseating dram-
Drinking habits of the country
(Making bumpkins into brutes)?
Nor the age of Mrs. Grundy?
Nor the price of shoddy suits?
Does not a cry of 'Woman's Rights'
Arouse a righteous ire
To rectify her wicked wrongs,
And wickeder attire?
While sermons may be preached that sticks
Have hammered out of stones,
Are 'cruelty to animals,'
And pictures by Burne Jones,
And 'universal suffrage'
(Including man and beast),
Iniquities in needlework,
And 'horrors in the East'
Themes that can move no flexile quill
To quiver in the least?
While vice is rampant through the land,
And china lovers swear
That real old 'Chelsea' can't be had,
Nor true blue crockery ware,
That 'Dresden's' unreliable,
And 'Wedgwood' even rare,

Should any hand be idle
That might propel a quill ?
Should any pulse be placid ?
Should any tongue be still ?
Till decency and order reign
Where drunkenness has been,
Till curious old mezzotints
On Morris-papered walls are seen
(Replacing noxious German prints
And poisoned arsenic green),
Till that far-distant, longed-for day
When savages shall think
That Christian creed, and Christian oaths,
And Christian stores of left-off clothes,
And Christian measles, Christian drink,
Are better than their heathen oaths,
Their meagre scantity of clothes,
Their unfermented drink.
Until, in short, some longed-for day
When, happy in success,
We've taught all men to clothe themselves,
And taught ourselves to *dress*.
Till all the nations feel as we
On English soil to-day,
That 'tis 'sinful' to be worsted
In a 'great and wicked' fray :

But to spend a little money,
And waste a lot of life,
Is a 'noble undertaking'
In a small unrighteous strife.
Till Mr. Gaze, and Mr. Cook,
Have cleared the space betwixt us,
And every hungry soul may look
On the Madonna of 'San Sixtus'
Until on all her eyes have dwelt
So loving, sweet, so sad-serene,
And each, assisted by their light,
His heart just once has seen
And felt—far better than before
Yet *very very* mean.—
Till Love is re-established
In Mrs. Grundy's rules,
Till bloodshed is abolished
And 'young ladies' boarding-schools,'
Till all who pine in woful want
May roll in wilful waste,
Till every one is very good
And everything in 'taste.'—
Should any hand be idle
That might propel a quill?
Should any pulse be placid?
Should any tongue be still?

NOW AND THEN

ONCE there was no heaven
Other than I knew
In the limitless world beyond
The fathomless blue
Of eyes that were wistful and wondrous
And loving and true.

Was the flame too fierce to be lasting ?
The setting too rich for the jewel ?
Was it pleasant forecasting the glances
Of eyes too kind to be cruel ?
Was the setting too rich for the jewel—
(Thy face too fair in the view) ?
Was it pleasant, beloved, blasting
A hope that was new
With words—a low murmur of music
On lips too sweet to be true ?

The tale is the tale oft told :
Poor theme for a man to bemoan !
The eyes are the ' wondrous ' eyes of old,
The ' loving ' heart a heart as cold—
The self-same stone :
 And the lips that have lied
 Are the lips that sighed
In low sweet undertone.

S P R I N G - T I M E

WHERE chestnuts overhang the stream
 Our boat shall lie ; here may we dream
 An hour away, and Care may wait.

Ah ! sweet—

Ah ! sweet

Thus for one hour to deviate
 From the rude pathway marked by
 Fate.

Our home is here : the skylark flings
 His music down, and tiniest things
 Beat the still air with labouring wings.

Ah ! sweet the odours,

Sweet the song ;

Sweet to forget, these scenes among,
 The jarring discords of the throng.

Now glide we onward ever slow,
And now, in the opal afterglow,
Listen, a voice sings clear and low.

Ah! sweet the singer ;

Sweet the strain !

Ah when, ah when, tired heart and brain,
Will that song gladden thee again ?

LIMITS

AH, Ladies, that some fairy band
 Would turn a barren offering
 Of thanks into a richer thing !
 The cunning of an artist's hand,
 The tuneful harp to sing,—

These are not mine, nor mine the power
 In graceful phrase, with studied art,
 To tell how in a saddened hour,
 As rain upon a thirsty flower,
 Kind wishes cheer the heart.

Alas, dear friends ! could we but train
 Upon a furrowed legal brow
 The Muse's sacred laurel bough—
 Ah, then I might not strive in vain
 (Beating an irresponsive brain)
 To waft in fitting measures now
 The breath of kindness back again !

T O O H A R D

‘THE days will be long,’ she murmured :
Her tears on his bosom fell.
‘But a little while,’ he answered,
As loth to say Farewell.

So the Farewell was not spoken :
Her lover crossed the main,
And the days *were* long while she waited,
And watched till he came again.

Too hard to be spoken at parting !
Her lover came back, and they tell
How they met, and how sweetly he uttered
(After long days of waiting) Farewell.

C H A R O N

CHARON, thy craft more slowly wends
 On peaceful Cam from shore to shore,
 And in thy locks the silver blends
 With larger freedom than of yore.

Thy bended form has little grace
 (Nimble thou wert in earlier days),
 And Time has sadly marred a face
 That few may love and none can praise.

We quail before thy searching glance ;
 Nay, bold boat-captains fear thine eye,
 And tremble, Charon, if perchance
 They have no little 'trifle' by.

Thou hast a son, a stalwart lad,
 Some sixty summers he or more,
 Who, when thy rheumatism's bad,
 Deftly manœuvreth the oar.

And thou art yet but ninety-six—
Talk not of leaving us till he
(Thy namesake, Charon, on the Styx)
Bequeaths his pole to thee.

IN THE 'LONG'

YOUTH of the 'Varsity,
 Flower of the land,
 Here in a far city
 Dreary I stand,
 And pledge thee, and wring (like a 'fresh-
 man')¹ thy hand.

Time-honoured Colleges!
 Classical halls!
 Seeking for knowledge is
 The last thing that palls
 Under the nurturing shade of thy walls!

Dwellers in Trinity—
 Tempest-tossed Cam—
 Dons of Divinity—
 'Little-go' cram
 Alike are deserving of prostrate salaam.

¹ A way of demonstrating affection not encouraged in Cambridge.

Up in an attic all
Corner and slope,
Men mathematical
Gloomily grope,
Of far away Fellowship, fostering hope.

Burning to head all lists,
Lavish of oil,
Prizemen and medallists
Ceaselessly toil,
Burning, eternally burning for spoil.

Slumbering lazily
Under the trees,
Ofttimes I hazily
Ponder of these
Sweet youths in their labours for 'Honours'
degrees.

Oft in the 'Vac.,' as I
Catch the perfumes
Of mingling tobaccos, I
Dream of my 'rooms'
Haunted by 'bedmakers,' beetles, and
glooms.

Of faces congenial
Time-honoured jokes,
Of servient menial
Sedative smokes
Of bountiful 'butteries,' obdurate 'oaks.'

· · · · ·
Youth of the 'Varsity,
Flower of the land,
Now in a far city
Dreary I stand
And pledge thee, and wring like a freshman
thy hand.

CAMBRIDGE LODGINGS, 1877

‘ I ASK not for cleanliness, care not for light,
 I crave not a wide-spreading view ;
 But I *must* have my curtains of purple and
 white,
 My table-cloth yellow and blue.’

‘ I ’m sure, sir, you ’ll find they are much to
 your mind,
 For here is no wide-spreading view ;
 Neither cleanly nor light, nor excessive in
 height—
 My curtains, moreover, are purple and white,
 My table-cloth yellow and blue.’

‘ But I *must* have a carpet of orange and green.
 And then, I decidedly think
 ’Twould add to the general effect of the scene
 Were the furniture covered in ultramarine,
 Gamboge and magenta and pink.’

‘ Oh then, sir, my rooms, if I rightly assume,
Will suit as to colours, I think ;
There ’s an oleograph of a ’uge Magdalene
All over gamboge, sir, and ultramarine,
My furniture covers is pink.

‘ And as for magenta—but pray, sir, to enter
And look at the picturs and that :
That there ’s in the Bible, sir, ‘ ’sputin’ with
doctors,’
And that ’s ‘ little Alick,’¹ sir (one of the
proctors),
And Longfield, the favourite bat,
And a dozen actresses, in beautiful dresses,
And a puppy *dèavourin’* a rat.

‘ And a great many more, sir, the rent, sir,
is £20.’
‘ My excellent woman, on questions of rent I
Assure you ’tis painful to dwell :
Your curtains and carpet, *recherché* and
chaste ;
Your pictures, selected with knowledge and
taste,
Will suit me remarkably well.’

¹ A disreputable vendor of ‘ dawgs.’

MORAL FRAGMENTS

FOR money, or for money's worth,
 On this unpleasant little earth
 Most men will sell their souls away ;
 Their bodies too : to barter clay
 (Unprofitable merchandise)
 For glittering gold, were surely wise !
 Says Rochefoucauld : ' True wisdom brings
 True knowledge of the price of things ' :
 We're *very* wise to-day.
 We're very wise ; I think we know
 The price of all things here below.
 We know that Vice and Virtue join
 In having both their price in coin.
 I knew of Virtue very young,
 Have heard at least his praises sung ;
 I learned, at quite an early date,
 To loathe the very name of Vice,
 And circumspectly estimate
 How much of goodness would suffice.

I learned from pastors, now with Shem,
That Heaven's gates seemed wide to
them ;

I learned from pastors, now with Ham,
How small a Vice may serve to damn.
But I digress, my gentle song
Becomes inordinately long.

Revenons a nos moutons.

The thought to-day occurs to me
To write yet once a diary,
And therein duly to rehearse,
In careful prose, or careless verse,
All that may happen day by day,
Or wise, or witty, grave or gay :
For I, in speculation bold,
A pessimistic doctrine hold,
And would empirically decide
Whether this view be justified
By facts observed, or whether men,
Who should know better, now and then
(Being philosophers) have tried,
In sheer malignity, to make
My spiritual sponsors quake,
To spoil my happiness, to crush
The flower of young Hope, and brush

The bloom from Faith's pure cheek. And
should

It prove that I have been misled
By cynics (a malignant brood),
And all my thinking on this head
Was false in drift, and in the letter,
And miserably misapplied,
All you will say is, 'All the better.'

Behold then, courteous spectator,
(Reader, I mean) the *raison d'être*
Of this my diary. Its aim
Is purely scientific : I disclaim
All joy in any earthly things
Save such as touch the secret springs
Of human progress. . . .

.

V A L E N T I N E

Nor mine the painter's skill to trace
With pencil free, in flowing line,
And nice detail, a perfect face ;
A figure cast in mould Divine,
Moved with a woman's grace.

The poet, in his sorrow blest,
May tell with quivering quill
Some tender tale of broken rest,
And gentle eyes with teardrops fill,
And pity fills the breast.

Nor is his labour all in vain
If heartfelt sighs his bosom wring,
And lower notes, and sadder strain,
Show distant ages wondering
A larger love, a deeper pain.

A heavy task ; but heavier yet
Is grief that finds not any song—
His joy short-lived, and long regret,
Who bears his burden in the throng,
And seeks in silence to forget.

INTROSPECTION

THROUGH weary hours I've pondered o'er
 A something which to write upon ;
 I've lain in frenzy on the floor,
 And striven to let my fancy soar,
 And nothing can I light upon !

Now shall I write in prose or verse ?
 Or whereunto my powers bring ?
 Shall I in tragic vein rehearse
 A mother's grief, a father's curse ?
 Or tender tale more softly sing ?

Or shall I examine my mind
 With the night-light of ' Introspection ' ?
 And then, having made from its innermost
 part
 (Where some have a lumber-room, others a
 heart),
 Of personal failings selection,

Explain to the world in the cleverest
novels

How the normal mind abnormally grovels.

The world of to-day wants 'knowledge of
self'—

The old true poets are all on the shelf ;

And he may aspire to bays

Who gives to the world without any
apology,

In metre, a volume of simple psychology.

I hope that it will not be long

Ere man knows enough of himself,

And seeks something better in song.

And yet, till the rage passes over,

A poet may live in clover,

And I willingly join the throng.—

· · · · ·
'Man, know thyself!'

All ye who are groping in college or school,

For love or for glory or pelf,

Henceforward must follow a different rule :

('Tis well for a man to know he's a fool)

Ineffable bathos! Study 'thyself.'

'Tis not from his books, 'tis not from his
friends

(Thank God!), nor his paltriest neighbour,
That a man will secure these desirable
ends—

This 'knowledge of life' that makes ample
amends

For the life that is lost in the labour.

Then turn from thy friends: shun Poetry,
Art;—

Be vain disputations avoided;

Examine, dear reader, thine innermost part;

And soon you will *think* you have fathomed
your heart,

And *know* that you haven't enjoyed it.

ART AND RELIGION IN
CAMBRIDGE, 1874-78

Rock me to sleep! mine eyes have seen
Conflicting shades of blue and green!
Creator of each subtle sense—
God, Harmony Divine!
What agonies acute, intense,
Are his who thro' life's long suspense
Aspires to taste Divine!

Rock me to sleep! the True, the Chaste,
The Beautiful, the Good,—
All these, with fretting haste,
By man uncultured, boorish, rude,
Are eagerly pursued,
Whilst Thy great gift, the sense of Taste,
Lies neglected, unpursued.

Rock me to sleep! take, take away
Thy servant's sense of sight!
Till earth again, in Thine own day,
Becomes a 'harmony in gray'—
Take me to Thee: Let angels lay
On aching eyeballs, Night.

PART II

LIGHT VERSE

Many of the following pieces are taken from my second book.

CRITICAL NOTICES OF 'MEASURED STEPS.'

i. 'The best things in this tiny book owe little to academies . . . the faculty to receive enjoyment is united with the faculty to convey it.'—*The Academy*.

ii. 'This volume of idiotic drivel is printed at the author's expense, but we think the few pounds gained by the publisher in the operation will not repay him for the discredit of having his name on the title-page.'—*American Bookseller*.

W I L L Y

THEY were talking of love, oh, so wisely!
How we slaved for that charity tea!
Of love in its 'higher relations,'
And 'Platonic' affection, dear me!

But poor little I was too flighty,
Contrived on too heedless a plan,
Too vain (so they said) and too trifling
To know aught of the ideal man.

They talked, and oh! I grew sleepy;
And the sun streamed in on the pane;
And I hardly seemed wanted, and somehow
I found myself down in the lane.

And then, oh then, I met Willy:
He popped from the hedge with his gun:
'So delightful,' he said, 'to meet you here,
Of all people under the sun.'

Yes, would you believe it, 'twas Willy,
And his two little dogs, 'Smalls' and
'Mods' ;

I faltered, 'Aunt Susie will miss me,'
But Willy just said, 'What's the odds!'

And he said—but, oh that I can't tell you!
But he kissed me before he began :
He's over six feet, and he's *lovely*,
If he isn't an 'ideal' man.

My eyes were tight shut, and he kissed me,
And 'Mods' gave a warning bow-bow ;
And I screamed, and thought, '*Was* my hair
tidy
While Willy recorded his vow?'

Then I slipped to my corner demurely,
And patted and smoothed down my hair,
And wondered if any one noticed,
And made up my mind not to care ;

For I still shut my eyes and saw Willy,
While we slaved for that charity tea,
And talked of love's 'higher relations,'
And 'Platonic' affection, dear me !

IDYLL OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

SHE moved, admiring students said,
 Amid the marbles like their queen ;
 He bore, a little high, his head,
 Aware of God-like mien.

'Tis afternoon: the long slant rays
 Make hot the dim Egyptian room ;
 Our queen her little luncheon lays
 On a low sculptured tomb.

And now the lad (his dark curls float
 As if from hers their gold to win)
 Draws from a worn-out velvet coat
 A paint-smeared sandwich tin.

Love spreads the feast ; their lips have met !
 So grace is said, and lingered o'er !
 Grey gods, ye smiled ! Nor look ye yet
 All grimly serious as before.

DARTMOOR

MISS 'MEG' stood pawing at the door,
As she would question, 'Wherefore tarry?
Brave old Dartmoor I'll put you o'er,
Young master, like old Harry.'

Then up I took my little crook
Ere Time was any older,
And Hell-to-split we frolicked it
O'er fern and furze and boulder.

MY LADY NICOTINE

‘FAIR friend of Mine, the lips that taught
The trick of blowing rings
Must answer for the lawless thought
Of kissing that it brings.’

What wonder that Love’s last recruit
For fear of Hope deferred
Proceeded then and there to suit
The action to the word !

‘OLD BOYS’
AT AMERSHAM HALL

I LONG have nursed, an old boy I,
A gouty leg upon the pillow ;
Yet was I in the days gone by
No mean performer with the willow ;

And so was asked (no doubt my years
Secured for me the invitation)
To travel down to X., good sirs,
And play the rising generation.

I came, I saw, I fielded ‘point’ ;
Till Buggins *minimus*, by Jingo,
Knocked my forefinger out of joint,
And chirruped, ‘*Hold* it, Old Flamingo !’

It made me hop ! A substitute
I signalled with the wounded digit,
And that young Buggins (little brute)
Ran on like a demented midgit.

'Retired hurt,' I sat and told

Of ancient days when there *was* cricket,
And Birrell slogged, and Spokey bowled,
And Winterbotham kept the wicket.

Ripe legends—(much improved upon)—

I babbled of the great 'Matrics,'
And how I caught, at *long* 'long on,'
A ball Jim Parry hit for six.

I did indeed ; 'Lost ball' was cried ;

The hero o'er his bat was bending ;
When overhead, supremely 'skied,'
I saw that awful ball descending.

And *ran*, like any acrobat

(Three hundred yards if ever man did),
And cleared the fence, and had him pat
Two inches from the ground, left-handed !

I paused, and heard, it touched my pride

(It was unfeeling and improper),
A fat boy, nicknamed 'Full-inside,'
Gasp out—'Jemima, wot a wopper !'

L O S T F R I E N D S

DEAR comrades! though ye figure not in
 Lowndes,
 (Thy costlier brethren long have left their
 home),
 How are ye ravished from me, tome by
 tome,
 For fewer shillings than ye cost me pounds!
 Shades of unthrifty authors! Hark, it
 sounds!
 My portal tells (a tedious metronome)
 Of sullen duns who onewhile forced to roam
 Kit Marlowe, Savage, Johnson, Goldsmith :
 Zounds!

Dim days of quiet pleasure that are fled!
 Once, snugly harboured, dallying by turns
 With new and old, in such pure peace I read
 As one who (want unknowing) idly learns.
 Now in yon gaping casement widely spread
 Stand Shakespeare only, Landor, Lamb
 and Burns.

IN CHAMBERS

THERE now, he's coming, tramp, tramp,
tramp!

Those seventy-two accursed stairs!
Certain and slow, I know the scamp,
And in a minute (if my prayers
Cannot prevent)—it's too late now—
He's at it; kicking round the scraper:
O God! And *must* I suffer so
To get a clammy paper?

Ah well, ah well! One day I know
(I've watched and waited two years now)
A lighter foot, with step less slow,
Will touch the stair, and then somehow
I shall be certain as the day
That *that* quick step is not to stop
Like all the rest (confound the fop!)
Down there at Jones's, just half-way.

‘I shall be by the fire suppose,’—
With my Chaucer in hand, as beseemeth
youth,
And the smoke will be curling about my nose
As I dream, in veriest truth,
That Law is no more, and the Junior Bar
In Courts of Love all hold a brief,
And the fairest of witnesses flock from afar
To debate of the ‘Flower and the Leaf.’

And then, ah then, on the wind-swept stair
Of this drear old Temple a voice will be
heard!

The rush of a dress, the trill of an air,
The scent of a rose, and the note of a bird!
And then, ah then! The book will fly,
Dear grand old bard at thy grand old bust;
And I shall be there in the wink of an eye—
She’s *coming*, you gibbering fool!—she *must*.

So you needn’t sit there, with your world-
wise air,
And prattle Propriety out of a book.
‘No lady would sing on a public stair’?
You *ass*! *My* girl sings *everywhere*!
And is *coming*, by hook or by crook!

You grinning old reprobate! Stop your
tum tum—

‘No lady’—hang ladies! *Mine* will not
be long.

I know not her face, but I know she will
come!

A flutter, a rush, a scent, and a song.

TRIOLET

IF you never write verses yourself,
 Dear reader, I leave it with you.
You will grant a half inch of your shelf
If you *never* write verses yourself.
I was praised by some lenient elf,
 I was damned by a heavy Review,
I 'm a bit of a critic myself,
 But, reader, I leave it with you.

MY PRETTY MAID

WHERE are you going to, my pretty maid ?

‘ I ’m going to publish, sir,’ she said.

Perhaps you ’ve a fortune, my pretty maid ?

‘ My verse is my fortune, sir,’ she said.

Then you ’d better not try it, my pretty maid.

There ’s an item for printing, and when it is
paid,

There’s ‘Commission on sales’—O innocent
maid!

In your rural retreat, have you heard of
THE TRADE ?

Oh, *where* are you going to, my pretty maid ?

INTERJECTIONS

I

‘C’GAR lights, yer honour? C’gar lights?’

May God forget *you* in your need.

Ay, *damn* you ; if folk git ther rights,

‘C’gar lights, yer honour? C’gar lights?’

Ther childern shan’t starve in the nights

For wantin’ the price of yer weed !

‘C’gar lights, yer honour? C’gar lights?’

May God forget *you* in your need.

II

‘FINE Vilets! Fresh Vilets! Come buy!

Ah, rich man, I would not be you.

All springtime it haunts me, that cry :

‘Fine Vilets! Fresh Vilets! Come buy!’

Whose loss, if she tell me a lie?

‘They’re starvin’, my God, sir, it’s true.’

‘Fine Vilets! Fresh Vilets! Come buy!’

Ah, rich man, I would not be you.

III

‘ICES! Programmes! Lemonade!’

’E thinks ’e’s a Hirving, my eye!

Why, puss, you bin crying? afraid?

‘ICES! Prográmmes! Lemonade!’

The fust time you sin a piece played?

It’s putty, but, Pussy, *don’t* cry.

‘ICES! Prográmmes! Lemonade!’

’E thinks ’e’s a Hirving, my eye!

I V

‘Down ’Oborn, sir? Circus? Bank, Bank!’

Yer’s a huproar, my bloomin’, Hoff side!
A flower, Miss? Ah, thankee, Miss, thank—

‘Down ’Oborn, sir? Circus? Bank, Bank!’

’Igher up! ’Ullo, Bill! Wot a prank!

If that ’ere old carcase ’ant shied!

‘Down ’Oborn, sir? Circus? Bank, Bank!’

Yer’s a huproar, my bloomin’! Hoff side!

V

'Ot P'taties! All 'ot, sir! All 'ot!

'Ere's a swell in a welveteen coat!

'E's a hartist, a hauthor—a wot?

'Ot P'taties! All 'ot, sir! All 'ot!

Ah, *there* now's a beauty you've got!

(Them writin's don't keep 'im afloat)

'Ot P'taties! All 'ot, sir! All 'ot!

'*Ere's* a swell in a welveteen coat!

INCIDENT OF THE OFFICE

I WAS sitting and was wondering
What was business ever for,
When there came a rush of petticoats
With a flutter to the door.

And a lady entered, flying
In a way to make you grin
(There were steps she did not notice,
For the doorway opens *in*).

She stopped against the stove-pipe
With a disconcerted air,
And panted, and I asked her
Had she not observed the stair?

And did she come on business?
Or would she like a bun?
And she, at first, said nothing
For business she had done.

Then, speaking very rapidly,
She answered, ' No, indeed !
I have, in fact, no business,
But I lately chanced to read

' In the *P.M.G.* a poem,
And they tell me—am I right?—
You are the gifted author,
And so I thought I *might*—

' I mean, you know, that seeing
Your name upon the door,
You *would* excuse my asking
Have you written any more? '

Then I rose, and thundered, ' Madam ! '
And said sternly, ' God forbid !
You are under some delusion, Madam,
Vanish ! ' and she did.

And still I sit a-wondering
What was business ever for ;
And I sigh for lady visitors,
But they come not any more.

LATTER-DAY SONG

HAD 'Robbie' Burns espied thy lips
 He'd have kissed them, that I know.
 We modern men dare no such quips,
 But slower go,
 And wind about with ill grimace
 For tardier shows of scantier grace.

Could 'Robbie' see the laughing eyes
 That glint from out their lashes so,
 They'd have no time for shy surprise
 ('Twixt 'Robbie's' kisses, don't you know)
 With laughter low.
 He'd kiss, and kiss, and whisper—Oh!
 Sweet words no living bard can show.

THE BOOK OF THE
RHYMERS' CLUB

VOL. II.

HAD you increased our number,
What sweetness might have been
Uprising as from slumber
We bards, in all thirteen,
Amassed this muck and lumber—
Sad work without a Queen!
HAD you increased our number,
What sweetness might have been!

M A L I C E

Who brought us together that day,
Gentle Alice?

Whole hours at thy feet I lay :
Who brought us together that day ?
Now, friendly and frank, let us say

It was Malice

Who brought us together that day,
Gentle Alice.

AFTER HEINE

IN penning this epistle
 You find perhaps relief :
But a notice of dismissal,
 My darling, should be brief.

‘SOME EMOTIONS AND A
MORAL’

YES, yes, you did : with smirk and smile,
And smooth persuasion, make it plain—
You oily thing of sin and guile—
That all my hair would grow again.

.

Once Love hid in my golden locks :
He stole behind me where I lay,
And, oh ! the recollection shocks,
His kiss met my kiss just half way.

And, oh ! with arms thrown back I made
A frame that his face closely held,
And he a tenderness betrayed
That my poor tresses had compelled.

.

Oh, what of bliss surpasses this ?

For one sweet hour to know the pain
Of utter love, of kiss on kiss

Descending in a golden rain !

Ah, one such hour, within my power,

A golden shower of kisses fell ;

And breast to breast—but, oh ! the rest—

I must not, dare not, cannot tell.

And now, ah now, my heart it bleeds—

From dreams to stony truths I pass

To see the tale of Time's misdeeds

Recorded in a hateful glass.

O stern surveyor ! 'neath thy ban

I trembling to my knees am brought :

My heart is breaking ; nothing can

Repair the havoc thou hast wrought.

ABOMINATIONS

No. 1 of a Proposed Series

OF irremediable ills
The vilest is the beastly board
That booms the fame of B——m's Pills!
Were I of public help assured,
I'd rid the land of all such ills :
I'd hang the man ; I'd burn the board
That booms the fame of B——m's Pills.

BY GERARD DOW

TRUE, true, very true ; but you see
It's useless to argue with me.
Ascetical scruples ? Fiddle-dee-dee !
She's *there*, in the Dresden gallery—
'A girl with a candle'—19c—
And any one, worthy to loosen her sandal,
Would give, though a belted earl,
His total possessions to blow out her candle,
I tell you, and kiss that girl !

F E B. 14

IN boyhood's hour my facile pen
Sped lightest love in smoothest lines :
Ah, many a bosom cherished then
My easy, artful Valentines.

But now, ah now, my aching breast
Knows deeper love by surer signs
Of pain that they have never guessed
Who kissed those artful Valentines.

A XMAS CARD

‘Now may the fair goddess Fortune fall deep in love
with thee.’

AH, kindest friend, kind words that cheer
A path too desolate and drear,
When troubled thoughts importune
For timid Joy to venture near !
Ah, blest indeed if it might be
That Fortune were in love with me,
As I in love with Fortune.

A PRESIDING EXAMINER

EMERGING from the darkness
Of London's sullen frown,
I, simulating Majesty,
Appeared in hood and gown ;

Commissioned to examine,
According to the Rule,
In all that they could cram in,
The boys of my old school.

I sat in my imposing seat,
The papers from me flew :
As though my learning were complete,
And I all knowledge knew.

But oh ! despite the hood and gown,
Despite the high respect
Paid to a mild official frown,
Yet had I to reflect

That 'neath a borrowed mortar-board
Mere ghosts of knowledge dwelt;
That false was my pretended hoard,
Ah me, how poor I felt!

Ah, boys! despite my College,
I am a learned man!
I've loads of sorry knowledge
Not set in any plan.

My wisdom, hard in earning,
I'd give it all to know
Again what I was learning
Now twenty years ago.

JEREMIAH AT THE CHESHIRE
CHEESE

O HEART of man !
What ills torment, what passions tear
The heart of man !
We Rhymers, gathered in a clan,
Disconsolate, aghast, declare
Thy burden is too hard to bear
O Heart of man !

SHELLEY AT OXFORD

1811 AND 1893

THE MASTER SPEAKS

‘THE rebel of eighty years ago
Is the hero of to-day.’
In this memorial none will know
The rebel of eighty years ago.
We Oxford dons, however slow,
Are now at last compelled to say
‘The rebel of eighty years ago
Is the hero of to-day.’

PREFERENCES

‘NAY,’ said the husband, ‘give him *this*,’
(In manifest alarm).

‘This is her proper likeness, *that*
Has but a sudden charm.

‘A look that flashes into light,
And quickly dies away,
May blind some passer ; as for me,
I love the looks that stay.’

And I but said, what could I say ?
(Not meaning any harm)
They’re yours, dear friend, the looks that stay ;
Spare then to me, she surely may,
A glance of sudden charm.

LOVE AND DEATH

FROM ÆSOP

LOVE on a summer day,
 Faint with heat,
 And tired of play,
 Came to a grotto fair,
 And courted slumber there,
 And flung his darts away.

This was, the Fable saith,
 The very cave of Death,
 But this Love did not know.
 As he had sped a shaft
 With more than common craft,
 Once, in his sleep, he laughed,
 At dawn he rose to go.

Love was at parting fain
 To have his darts again :—

O Love, beware, beware,
The shafts of Death are there,
Of mortal man the bane.

But Love cared not a stiver ;
Intent on human hearts,
He gathered to his quiver
His own with Death's black darts ;
And glorious in the morning
He winged his golden way ;
Fair maidens had forewarning
That Love was on the way.
Strong men, their labour scorning,
Did nothing all that day,
For dallying with a maiden
Is neither work nor play.
Old men and women saddened
In the dragging of the years,
All on a sudden gladdened
To laughter and to tears.

Love was on earth again,
Intending ill to none,
(He wotted not of pain,
Blind creature of the sun).

Not knowing what he did,
And restless, till 'twas done,
Both young and old
He rushed amid
And shot his arrows
Every one.

And some cried out, ' 'Tis Death he
deals,'—
And surely Death did come.
But others cried, ' 'Tis Love, 'tis
Love'—
And Love there was for some.

S U B U R B A N

HE leaned upon the narrow wall
That set the limit to his ground,
And marvelled (thinking of it all)
That he such happiness had found.

There long he sat in perfect peace ;
He smoked his pipe, he thanked his stars
(*His* stars, unnumbered in the lease),
And blest the subterranean cars

That bore him nightly back to win
The home where he had left a heart,
Not trusted in the Devil's din
Of London's damned money mart.

PSEUDONYM LIBRARY

FISHER UNWIN publishes,
 Price one-and-six,
 In the 'Pseudonym' Library,
M'selle Ixe.

Publishers are constantly
 Up to such tricks ;
 This is their latest,
M'selle Ixe.

He who sits reading it
 Hopelessly sticks
 In this pseudonymous
M'selle Ixe.

But the 'get up' of it
 Everything licks :—
 Buy it, ye Bibliacs,
M'selle Ixe !

He who gets discount
Has straw for his tricks;
If you want to lose fourpence,
Pay one-and-six.



PART III

TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY



MOTHER EARTH AND THE
NEW WOMAN

Love in my arms lies weeping,
His tiny limbs upcurled :
Art thou so soon, my darling,
Awearry of the world ?

Come, come, a baby's troubles
Are easily redressed :
Drink deep, drink deep, my darling,
God gives thee of his best.

Ah, now about my bosom
The tiny hands have curled !
To thee, to thee, my darling,
The bosom is the world.

Love in my arms lies weeping.
O God ! dear God ! recall
Thy children to my breast, for here
Is nourishment for all.

FOR AN IDEAL

I LOOKED out over the ocean
And saw a maiden stand
Where billow and cloud commingled
In a vanishing golden land.

I passed out over the ocean,
And held the Sun-Maiden's hand,
And lost for ever the treasure
Of Love in my Fatherland.

SONG IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

THE voice of Labour soundeth shrill—
Mere clamour of a tuneless throng—
To you who barter at your will
The very Life that maketh Song.

O you whose sluggard hours are spent
The Rule of Mammon to prolong,
What know ye of the stern intent
Of hosted Labour marching strong?

When we have righted what is wrong,
Great singing shall your ears entreat :
Meanwhile in movement there is song,
And music in the pulse of feet!

E N V O Y

DEAREST, I have put my life
In a tiny book of song ;
If I speak with halting voice,
Yet may broken words prolong

The memory of the golden hour
When we were given each to each,
And in silence, wanting words,
Perfect love found perfect speech.

PLYMOUTH HARBOUR

A SONG

OH, what know they of harbours
Who toss not on the sea !
They tell of fairer havens,
But none so fair there be

As Plymouth town outstretching
Her quiet arms to me ;
Her breast's broad welcome spreading
From Mewstone to Penlee.

Ah, with this home-thought, darling,
Come crowding thoughts of thee.
Oh, what know they of harbours
Who toss not on the sea !

UNWORTHY

AM I not worthy of thee? O my child,
Come close, come close, and nurse upon
thy breast
My aching brow! Let thy sweet hands be
pressed
Cool, cool on these hot eyelids till the wild,
Ungoverned tumult of my brain is stilled.
Close, close, till that sound dies within
my ears,
And I may cease from questioning with
tears
Why God has made me love thee; O my
child!

MARGUERITE

LOVETH he, or loveth not,
All these idle years ?
An he love me, Laughter ;
An he love not, Tears.

Loveth he, or loveth not ?
Flower, canst thou tell ?
Thou shalt deck my bosom
An he love me well.

Loveth he, or loveth not ?
Oh, but life were sweet !
Say, ah say, ' He loves thee,'
Gentle Marguerite !

MY LOVE : WHERE ART THOU ?

My Love, where art thou ? Crowding waves
Press ever on the strait confine
Of the still spirit-haunted shore
Where my soul waiteth thine.

My Love, where art thou ? Once, ah once,
Thy vision in the clamorous mart
Had drawn me surely from the throng
To a chamber set apart

Where weaving from its finest strand
My spirit fashioned for thy shrine
A veil to shroud thee from a gaze
Raised unabashed to thine.

But now, where art thou? Say not, lost!

The sanctuary of thought is bare:

The shrine where stood thy picture shows

The wan face of Despair.

.

Not 'lost'—the low sweet voice that bade

Me wait the lapse of dragging years:

Not 'lost'—my vision in the throng

Now dimly seen through tears.

IN ACCOUNT WITH TIME¹

TIME cannot grudge to me
 The few glad hours I spend—
 Glad hours of rare companionship—
 In converse with my friend.

My friend thus counsels me :
 ‘ Be it with Time agreed
 That thou wilt in my company
 Seek rest when thou hast need.’

Sweet words (if words could soften
 The pain of parting)—‘ May
 I come indeed as often
 As I have need ? ’ I say.

‘ Time cannot grudge to me
 The sure release from pain
 I have in thy sweet ministry
 Of solace to my brain.’

¹ Reprinted from *The Bookman*.

ANNIVERSARY

THESE five years.

Ah, they have shown us one thing plain,

These five years.

Joy has a deeper spring than tears :

Love knows a harbour shut to pain :

Dearest, they are not spent in vain,

These five years.

A D R E A M

NIGHT brought a dream of love—
A fond sweet dream of thee ;
Thy heart beat warm upon my heart ;
Thy dear arms circled me.

Alas ! but dawn now shows
A cheerless couch to me.
'Twas sleep beguiled an empty heart ;
My vacant arms sought thee.

WITH FLOWERS

I KNOW not how in any wise,
 Dearest, my aching love to show ;
 If flowers have voices these will speak,
 These flowers I gave you
 Long ago.

And they will whisper, ' Day and Night
 He sheddeth tears of joy to know
 He has not lost, not lost, not lost
 The love you gave him
 Long ago.'

I N J U N E

AH, Love, I lack thy kisses
In the warm sweet breath of June :
I am lonely amid lovers—
Love, come soon.

A blue sea stretches waveless
'Neath a blue blue sky this June :
I am panting for thy love, Love—
Love, come soon.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

ATHWART the shadowed path
Of Life wherein we tread,
How often Beauty hath
A ray of sunlight shed!

If on my shadowed path
She throws her light to-day,
I forth shall go with heart aglow,
Rejoicing on my way.

TO A SWEET SINGER

My heart was full the while I wrote
The song you sang yestreen.
That it would fill so sweet a throat
I could not have foreseen.

So long as Love is in the land,
He rules by right divine :
So long will there be fresh demand
Of voices sweet as thine.

E D E L W E I S S

ABOVE the line
Of thawless snows
On yonder height
One flower grows.

And in my bosom
Winter-bound
Lives one such flower
Which thou hast found.

O F M E

THINK, Love, of me.
Far from thy side to-night,
Think, Love, of me.
So shall I absent see,
Pictured upon the night,
Thy dear face set in light.
Think, Love, of me.

DAY AND NIGHT

I HELD her hand
 To-day,
And whispered a word,
 And she heard ;
And I did not work,
And she did not play,
 To-day.

I touched her lips
 To-night ;
And none knew, but we two,
 The delight ;
And I shall not sleep,
And she will not sleep,
 To-night.

W H E N

WHEN laughing Joy robs Sorrow
Of all her load of thought,
The harp and voice may borrow
A sweetness yet untaught.
To be merry, till the morrow
Dawns with its memories fraught,
And the tired thief
Brings back to Grief
Her heavy load of thought.

L O S T

Something has gone.
O Life ! great giver as thou art,
Something has gone.
Not Love, for Love, as years roll on,
Plays evermore a fuller part.
But from the treasure of my heart
Something has gone.

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT

FAIR flowers! the hand I fain would kiss,
That so among you lightly moved,
To gather this—and this—and this—
The while you nodded and approved.

In culling leaves so rare of scent,
It was (was it not?) her intent
To grace a friendship old as ours
With fragrance passing that of flowers?

A DOLE

THE bread I eat
Fills me to-day with shame.
Lo, here I fling it to the street :
Not money.: just the bread I eat.
O comrades, for your lofty claim
Take, take from me, in Freedom's name,
The bread I eat.

HOMEWARD BOUND

IN the low pathway of the sun,
Far-shadowed on the golden fern,
And robed in purple twilight, one
Stood and awaited his return ;
And shone upon him unforeseen
As he with heavy step drew near :
Ah, then was greeting sweet between
Us two old lovers—Sister dear !

PICTURES BY FLORENCE SMALL

I.—AUTUMN

O AUTUMN leaves !
 Bind in thy tresses, maiden fair,
 These Autumn leaves.
 See Hope fulfilled in rangèd sheaves :
 See in dead Nature Love's despair :
 For brooding joy, for russet care,
 These Autumn leaves.

II.—THE POEM

HER brow upon thy pages bent,
 Thy volume, Poet, in her hands ;
 She knows not, she so innocent,
 How like a pictured maid she stands.

Sing, Singer, to thy heart's content !
 Paint, Painter ! shall he rival thee ?
 Twin arts have equal graces lent :
 So art thou, Maiden, fair—and free.

AN UNFINISHED PORTRAIT

How shines the gold amid the brown
Of heavy tresses tumbling down,
 In Art's despite!
How Nature blends her red and white!

Ah, happy painter, it is thine
That 'sweet disorder' to confine:
If thou shouldst order it aright,
 Ah, what delight!

TO WILLIAM THOMPSON

(Dedication to Chambers Twain)

OLD friend, it was my earliest thought
 That your name should be written here;
 For sooth, if Friendship counts for aught,
 I hold no living man so dear.

Yet o'er my pages now I look,
 And am, for very shame, deterred :
 Of Love unending tells the book,
 But of our Friendship not a word.

A BIRTHDAY

DEAR sister, with an idle line,
There comes no dainty thing
To grace thy dress, to deck thy hair;
These may some other bring.

Love, of an essence volatile,
Will oft elude the string
That bindeth sure the decent gift
Of formal offering.

So in no cumbering parcel tied,
But swift, on his own wing,
Love, faring forth to gain thy side,
Has only love to bring.

F R I E N D S

HANDS clasped a moment on the strand :
The one must stay, the other go :
There is not any sign to show
That friends have parted, hand from hand.

The years roll on ; the two friends stand :
The welcome spoken, speech is slow ;
Still is there not a sign to show
Friend dead to friend, as hand strikes hand.

IN A BACHELOR'S GARDEN

It seems, ah me ! but yesterday
She plucked, half jesting was she not ?
And blushed (so near my heart they lay)
Yon flowers that plead — ' Forget-me-
not.'

Ah, ageing heart ! old memories throng !
Again, meseems, her kiss strikes hot :
Her voice, long mute, bursts into song
Who planted that Forget-me-not.

A SCIENCE OF HISTORY

THINK you it would be good indeed
 (Surveying on the walls of Time
 The hurried finger trace) to climb
The heights of Fancy, and to read

The import of the coming years ?
 Or would the load be heavier yet ?
 A paler grief unheeded, wet
The Rock of Destiny with tears ?

QUESTION

To one who long a worldly gain
In worldly paths has sought,
May aught of better worth remain,
Save peradventure caught
On cobwebs in the brain,
Some fragment of untainted thought?

TWICE DEAD

THE spirit ever hath desire
To pierce, thro' forms of Friendship,
higher,
And somewhere gain its promised part
Of true communion, heart with heart.

Ah, friend of Youth ! thy fresh-cut grave
Is warmer than the hand you gave :
Else were not (strangers many years)
Lost friend, lost friend ! these tears, these
tears.

MAGDALENE

‘ You are a beautiful woman,’ he said.
 Oh, a long night followed that day.
 The whole long night rang rang in my head
 His words, and his look as I lay

I could not forget. I lay weeping, and
 vowed—

‘ I will hold hereafter in trust
 This Beauty of mine: I will live and be proud,
 Not humbled, as now, in the dust.’

.

We met, as one meets men, any way,
 I’ve met, it may be, men by the score.
 And talked about nothing, as any one may
 When one has to spend ten minutes or
 more.

Then parted—a light matter parting with
men?

But the eyes of this man were aflame in his
head—

He gave a great hand, and was silent, and
then,

‘ You are a beautiful woman,’ he said.

ALMA MATER

LADY, my thanks : this night my dream
 Is of a pathway stretching fair
 Through meadows bordering a stream,
 And flowers, thy gift, spring everywhere.

By Grandchester, by Trumpington,
 Our quiet Cam-side pacing slow,
 At eve I pass, still musing on
 The unseen years, as years ago.

My flower-dream annulling time
 Gives back the garnered hours to me ;
 Gives back a perished trick of rhyme
 That hardly shapes these words to thee ;

Gives crowding thoughts of earlier days :—
 Lost friend, whose love I ask in vain,
 I walk the old oft-trodden ways
 Thy hand within mine arm again.

Ah, the old days! The sun sank there:

Ah, the old days! Thus sped the hours:

But dream-born seems the perfumed air,

And of the dream my path of flowers.

IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM¹

DEAD sage, dead priest, unheard ye call
 Up from the valleys where ye sleep :
 Love's clarion soundeth over all ;
 His fires glow from steep to steep.

Professor, I have little store
 Of learning you may fitly seek,
 I covet no Department's lore—
 Egyptian, Syriac, or Greek.

But oft I tread these halls alone,
 And mark where, treasured with the rest,
 There lies a stone, no common stone.
 'A fragment'—of a 'woman's breast.'

Profess, Professor, all you know !
 I ask, among the spoils you heap,
 Has Time a greater thing to show ?
 Have we a holier thing to keep ?

¹ Reprinted from *The Speaker*.

R E M E M B E R

REMEMBER, love, how Burns would bring
His verses to the ingle-side,
And bid his dear-loved Jeanie sing,
And by that test abide.

Then what her ear determined true
Her lips gave ringing to the night ;
And Burns was glad, and surely knew
That he had sung aright.

Dear love, for me play such a part ;
If I sing truly thou canst tell :
I bring my verses to thy heart ;
If any enter, it is well.

Q U E S T I O N

THE inmost tenant of my heart,
Dearest, thou knowest well thou art ;
But love alone can solve a doubt
If I love thee, Love, out and out.

G I F T S

TAKE back the song you sang, Love :
Take back the gift you brought :
Take back the word you gave, Love :
Let me only keep the thought

That you knew not what you said, Love :
You deemed a song was naught :
You brought a gift to me, Love ;
And knew not what you brought.

EVER AND A DAY

HE murmured, 'Love, for ever!'
She whispered, 'and a day?'
And I, whose pain ends never,
Saw her stand in her bride's array,
And knew that *her* love was for ever,
And his false love for a day.

G. D. R.

1879

DEAREST sister, Sorrow dwells
 In the home as sound in shells
 That whisper evermore
 Along a silent shore :
 Evermore, and mournfully,
 The gathered sadness of the sea.

1889

A voice unheard these many years ;
 A face long summers shut from sight ;
 That face I saw, that voice to-night
 Gave quiet in a world of fears.
 Sister, ten years may serve for tears ;
 In twice ten years I shall not miss
 His very look, the ring of his
 Great voice abideth in mine ears.

W. H. WIDGERY

‘ HE worketh still,’
Superior to Death’s smart,
He worketh still.
What his spent years could not fulfil
I shall endeavour for my part,
For ever, living in my heart,
He worketh still.

TO JOSEPH SKIPSEY

With the Book of the Rhymers' Club

IF I herein have phrased a thought
 In words that jar not on your ear,
 I shall be happy : Love has wrought
 So in my heart that words are naught
 To me at all, if insincere.
 Unless with sacred meanings fraught
 Words are but words. To 'perfect praise'
 Is the sole aim of Art : the Thought
 Of daily bread, too dearly bought,
 Deters no poet—Time repays.

OF QUIET

TIRED brain, there is a place of rest
On the broad bosom of the Land,
Where quiet will reward the quest
Of Quiet ; and the iron hand
Of Toil upon the rolling hills
Will be unheard.—Ah, there shall we
Find quiet in the tumbling rills ;
Or in the tumult of the sea,
The quiet that my dream fulfils
Of Quiet—aching tho' it be.

R. A. LEDWARD, SCULPTOR

MARK how with loving hand he wrought
Here on the dial that counts the hours
Thy sad great figure, wingèd Time,
Set heavy-hearted 'mid the flowers.

Ah, even while he wrought did he
Close a great bargain with the years
The sooner with these flowers to be
That for their nurture have thy tears.

FOR AN URN

SHE chose to die.
Grave here beneath our helpless flowers
‘ She chose to die.’
Alas ! the sun forsook her sky
What while he gladdened other bowers :
She tasted life—a few sad hours :
And chose to die.

ART'S EXTREMES

PROUDLY the father,
 Lowly the wife,
 Bends o'er a child sleeping,
 Dearer than life.
 Pride speaks in the father,
 Love is mute in the wife,—
 ' Did ever a painter
 Paint like Life ? '

Heavy the footfall,
 Laboured the breath ;
 One quitteth the chamber
 Held by Death.
 His gaze is estranged,
 All strangely he saith—
 ' Was there ever a sculptor
 Wrought like Death ? '

THE PROTEST OF SPRING

O Spring !
Say not that She is dead.
Green month of bursting flower and leaf
Say not that She is dead.
For joy of life thy tears are shed ;
Naught, naught to thee are mine of grief ;
April ! Fling wide thy disbelief
That She is dead.

L E T R E S T

WHAT art was lavished on the bower ;
What nameless beauty hers for dower ;
What perfect moments made the hour !

They steal like death from room to room ;
They stifle sobs that break the gloom ;
They keep the silence of the tomb.

Bring up old friends to view the bed ;
Bring up, with slow, mock-solemn tread,
The hired transport of the dead.

Let rest the gold that holds her hair ;
Let rest the ring none else might wear ;
Let rest the strong man weeping there.

L I F E — L I F E

LIFE, life, if murmuring there be
Of low estate, or scanty pelf,
The plaint upgoeth not from me.
Thy toys lie broken on the shelf—
Love swept them with an idle breath :
Life, life ! Love overmastereth thee :
Grant gentle passage unto death.

TRIOLET

Lo, thy poor ring is broken !
These kisses bind for aye.
Let but this word be spoken,
Now thy poor ring is broken :
' True love outlasts his token,
Yet cannot choose but stay.'
Lo, thy poor ring is broken !
These kisses bind for aye.

THE UNDERSONG

TO-DAY shall be no song, Love,
Here quiet now with thee ;
No song holds all my love, Love,
So singing shall not be.

Let my hands frame thy face, Love ;
Take this kiss for thy brow ;
And these for thy tired lids, Love ;
Ah ! tears, not singing, now.

Lay thy cheek to my cheek, Love ;
Rest thy dear hand in mine ;
Let thy heart search my heart, Love.
If it indeed be thine.

And let there be no song, Love,
Save only this that tells
How deep, beneath all singing,
Song in the heart upwells.

PART IV

PRENTICE WORK—TRANSLATIONS; MOSTLY
FROM HEINE

APPRECIATIONS

‘It would be good for Mr. Radford, and better for Heine, if he would cease to attempt the impossible and traduce the exquisite German lyrics.’—*American Traveller*.

‘In some translations from *Heine* Mr. Radford displays a very uncommon grasp of the inner meanings of poetry which almost defies adequate interpretation into English.’—*Scotsman*.

‘A fresh crop of hopeless failures in attempts to translate Heine.’—*Scottish Review*.

‘He succeeds far better in his original verses than in his translations of Heine, which are unpolished and inaccurate. Humour is certainly not Mr. Radford’s strong point.’—*Manchester Examiner*.

‘Even the uninitiated can see at a glance that here is the perfection of translation.’—*Literary World*.

‘Of course in a free country any man may make a fool of himself if he likes, but this liberty ought to be restrained when impious hands are laid on a poet like *Heine*.’

(And so on *ad nauseam*.)

AN ELEGY

TH. GAUTIER

To mark where lies thy treasured dust
 No pile is set,
 Poor Clémence, in thy morn by death
 Untimely met.

Thou sleepest at the hillock's foot
 In lowliest state,
 And one pale willow o'er thy grave
 Bends desolate.

Thy name by rain and snow outworn
 No more is read
 On yon black-wooded cross which guards
 Thy cheerless bed.

But Love, who aye remembereth, comes
 Where no foot nears,
 And bringeth flowers, and keepeth troth,
 And sheddeth tears.

CHAMBERS TWAIN

HERMANN NEUMANN

THE heart hath chambers twain,
Wherein
Dwell Joy and Pain.

Joy in his chamber stirs,
While Pain
Sleeps on in hers.

O Joy, refrain, refrain !
Speak low—speak low—
You may awaken Pain.

DE SEE IS VULLER WATER

(From *Quickborn*—KLAUS GROTH)

THE sea is full of water ;
The heart is full of blood ;
Whenas the moon appeareth
Upmounts and falls the flood ;

So, love, when thou art near me
Upwelleth my heart's blood,
As mounts and falls the ocean,
As ebbs and flows the flood.

AN HEBEN TRECHT DE
MULKEN

(From *Quickborn*—KLAUS GROTH)

THE sky is overclouded,
Grey billows lash the shore :
O world so vast and lonesome !
O heart all bruised and sore !

Does the sun shine brightly yonder ?
Do bright smiles deck the land ?
I see but grey and cheerless
The mist roll up the strand.

ADE, ADE, DE SUMMER GEIT

(From *Quickborn*—KLAUS GROTH)

FAREWELL, farewell, now Summer's sped,
Till wakes the coming year!
Farewell, farewell, the leaves are dead :
Farewell, my heart is sere.

I sang all through the happy time
Of Summer ; now 'tis done,
My flight is for another clime,
Still southward with the sun.



FROM HEINE'S 'BUCH DER LIEDER'



‘DIE BERGSTIMME’

ALL sadly through the wild ravine
 The warrior slowly drave :
 ‘Ah, now am I nearer my darling’s arms,
 Or nearer the silent grave?’
 And the mountain answer gave—
 ‘To the grave.’

Still further the warrior rideth,
 A sigh breaks from his breast :
 ‘And must I then enter the grave so soon?
 Ah, well, in the grave there is rest’;
 And again—from the mountain’s crest—
 ‘There is rest.’

The warrior’s brow was troubled;
 A tear on his bronzed cheek fell :
 ‘If rest there is none in the world for me
 The rest of the grave will be well’;
 And the voice from the mountain fell :
 ‘Will be well.’

‘IM WUNDERSCHONEN MONAT
MAI ’

ALL in the merry month of May,
Spring's drift of blossom bringing,
I cherished in my heart of hearts
The flower of love upspringing.

All in the merry month of May,
When every bird was singing,
I spake from out my heart of hearts
Of soft desire upspringing.

‘AUF FLUGELN DES GESANGES’

AWAY! to the shore of the Ganges.
 Away! on the pinions of song,
 To a bower in green leafage entangled,
 Deep hid from the throng.

There love is a garden with flowers
 That bloom in the pale moonshine ;
 The lotus-flowers dream of their sister ;
 Ah! let them not pine.

There violets are whispering softly
 (Their eyes to the pale stars climb) ;
 There roses are softly retelling
 Sweet tales of old time.

Darts by, and pauses, and listens,
 The wary mild-eyed gazelle ;
 And the far-heard Ganges quiets
 The spirit as a spell

Ah, there will we lie embowered
'Neath the tall palm's spreading crest
There, Love, will be endless pleasure,
And there will be rest.

‘DU LIEBST MICH NICHT’

THOU lovest me not, thou lovest me not,
But that is a little thing ;
So I find but grace to see thy face
I am happy as a king.

Thou hatest, hatest me outright !
Dear pouting lips that smiled !
They are sweet lips still, and their kisses will
Console me, sweetest child.

‘ICH GROLLE NICHT’

I MUST endure : tho' my sad heart should
break,

O Love for ever lost ! I must endure.
And thou mayest shine in diamonds bedight—
They shed no lustre o'er thy bosom's night.

I've known it long. In dreams that troubled
rest

I saw night chambered in thy loveless breast ;
Saw serpents feeding in its inmost part,
And saw, lost Love, how thou wert sick at
heart.

‘JA, DU BIST ELEND’

YES, thou art wretched, and I must endure ;
 Love, we shall both be wretched until death.
 When these sick hearts shall break, there is
 one cure :

Love, we shall both be wretched until death.

I see thy lips that wreathèd are with scorn ;
 I see thy bright eyes flashing haughtily,
 And thy proud bosom statelily upborne,—
 Yet art thou wretched—wretched, Love, as I.

Thy scorning lips are twitched with stifled
 pain ;

Tear-dimmed thine eyes as jewels at a breath,
 Thy proud breast hides its agony in vain,—
 Love, we shall both be wretched until death.

‘UND WUSSTEN’S DIE BLUMEN,
DIE KLEINEN’

DID the wee flowers know what sadness
Lay hid in my wounded heart,
They would shed soft tears till weeping
 Made sorrow depart.

Did the nightingales know it, darling,
This sorrow endured so long,
They would sing full-throated to comfort
A suffering heart with song.

The bright stars, did they know it,
In pity of my woe
Would fall from their places in heaven
And shine in my breast below.

They none of them know it, darling :
The wound, and the heartache, and woe ;
The hand that stabbed, and the weapon,
 One only can know.

‘VERGIFTET SIND MEINER
LIEDER’

My songs are poisoned, dearest :
How other could they be ?
You poured, you know, the poison
In the loving-cup for me.

My songs are poisoned, dearest:
How other could they be ?
There are serpents in my bosom ;
Yes, serpents, Love, with thee.

‘AM KREUZWEG WIRD
BEGRABEN ’

THE cross-roads mark his resting
Who found no rest till the end ;
And thereby is a blue flower springing
Called ‘ The poor-devil’s friend.’

I stood in the night by the cross-roads,
And sighed for his rest in the end ;
While the flower in the moonshine shivered
Called ‘ The poor-devil’s friend.’

‘WENN ICH AN DEINEM
HAUSE’

I PASS at morn the cottage,
And thy trellised window see,
And am glad at heart, my darling,
If I gain but a glimpse of thee.

Thy great brown eyes regard me
With timid questioning now—
‘Who art thou, and what comfort,
Sad stranger, lackest thou?’

I am a German singer,
In Germany renowned,
Where the noblest names are numbered,
There my name will be found.

And what I lack, lack many
In my land more than gold;
Where they tell of saddest sorrows
My sorrow will be told.

‘WIE KANNST DU RUHIG
SCHLAFEN’

AND can you sleep so sweetly
And know me living still?
Nor dream that my pain may awake again
And break my heart and will?

Do you know the old-time story,
How once a dead man drave
At the darkest hour to his lady's bower
And dragged her to the grave?

Believe me, my child-angel,
In slumber now afar,
I'm living still, and am stronger yet
Than any dead men are.

‘DAS IST EIN SCHLECHTES
WETTER’

WITHOUT, it is snowing and blowing
And raining—a perfect sheet !
Within, I sit and glower
On a dark forsaken street,

Where on the pavement glimmers
A single flickering light,
As a little old woman totters
With weak steps through the night.

I fancy she’s out buying
The butter, eggs, and flour,
To make a cake for a darling
Big daughter to devour ;

Who lies in the armchair musing,
And blinks in the light, and dreams,
While over her face the loosened hair
In golden splendour streams.

‘MENSCH, VERSPOTTE NICHT
DEN TEUFEL’

FRIEND, conciliate the Devil,
Brief, ah ! brief the course we run ;
And the Everlasting Blazes
Is no fable pulpit-spun.

Friend, discharge the debt thou owest :
’Tis a weary course we run ;
And you ’ll often have to borrow,
As before you ’ve often done.

‘DAS HERZ IST MIR BEDRUCKT’

My heart is troubled, and I think
 With longing of the olden time
 When in a pleasant world men dwelt,
 And life ran peacefully as rhyme.

But now is this all overset,
 And all is strain and stress instead :
 The Lord above, He is no more ;
 Down under is the Devil dead.

And all is rotten, mean, and vain,
 Sad, sullen, and of joy bereft :
 There were no halting-place for Pain,
 But that a little love is left.

‘HERZ, MEIN HERZ, SEI NICHT
BEKLOMMEN’

HEART, my heart, yield not to sadness ;
Be submissive to thy fate ;
Spring shall restore thee—only wait—
All that winter takes from gladness.

Think but how much there still is left thee ;
Think but how fair the world is still ;
Heart, my heart, befall what will
Love shall never be bereft thee.

‘DU BIST WIE EINE BLUME’

THOU art like unto a flower,
As fresh, as pure, as fair ;
I gaze on thee, and sadness
Steals o'er me unaware.

I fain would lay all gently
My hands on thy head in prayer,
That God may keep thee ever
As fresh, as pure, as fair.

‘DIESEN LIEBENSWÜRD’GEN
JUNGLING’

FRANKLY, this young man I honour :
He exhibits graces rare.
Often has he stood me oysters,
Also Rhine-wine and liqueur.

And his clothes so nicely fit him ;
And his tie proclaims the swell ;
And he looks in every morning,
Hoping I am pretty well :

Talks about my ‘reputation,’
And my wit, and grace of style,
And he ’d do, if I would let him,
Oh, a thousand things the while !

And at night, in rooms surrounded
By the fairest of the fair,
He declaims my ‘Heavenly’ poems
With a soft abstracted air.

Truly, is not this refreshing?
Such young men as him I praise
Are not common; they are growing
Rare and rarer nowadays.

‘AN DEINE SCHNEEWEISSE
SCHULTER’

Laid on thy snow-white shoulder
My head is at rest.
I listen—and know the unquiet
Desire of thy breast.

The strapping hussars have stormed it,
And entered without strife :
And, to-morrow, the woman will leave me
That I love as my life.

What tho’ in the morning she leave me,
To-night she is mine.
My head is at rest on her bosom,
And her snow-white arms entwine.

‘BIST DU WIRKLICH MIR SO
FEINDLICH ’

AND art thou indeed so unloving ?
And art thou for ever estranged ?
I ’ll bemoan to the world my treatment,
Now thou art changed.

Ye thankless red lips ! tell me—
Can you utter such words in dispraise
Of him who kissed you so fondly
In happier days ?

‘IN DEN KUSSEN WELCHE
LUGE’

AH, what lies the kisses cover !
In their seeming, ah, what bliss !
Sweet it is to lure a lover,
Sweeter his delusion is !

Spite thy protestations, fairest,
I can tell what thou 'lt receive ;
I 'll believe in all thou swearest :
All I swear to thou 'lt believe.

FROM HEINE'S 'NEUE GEDICHTE'



‘SAG MIR WER EINST DIE
UHREN ERFUND’

Who was it that found out Time, I pray ?
The days of the week, and the hours of the
day ?

Ah, that was a sorrowful cold-stricken wight
Who, wrapt in thought on a winter's night,
Sat counting the hours by the stealthy ‘pick’
Of the mice, and the woodworm's slow ‘tick,
tick.’

Who was it that found out kisses, I pray ?
A youth with the lips of a god, they say ;
Who kissed, and kissed, and went on his
way ;

And all in the merriest month of May
When everywhere fresh flowers were spring-
ing,
And sunshine laughed and birds were sing-
ing.

‘WIE NEUBEGIERIG DIE MÖWE’

AH, Love ! the seagulls hover,
 And are watching ever near
 As wishful to discover,
 When thy sweet lips press mine ear,

What the sweet low voice has murmured
 That thrills me so with bliss,
 And if love's secret passeth
 In a whisper or a kiss ?

Ah, Love ! what should I answer ?
 There is none can answer this—
 Adroitly intermingled
 Are the whisper and the kiss.

‘DAS FRAULEIN, STAND AM
THURE’

ON the shore there stands a maiden :
The toil of the day is done,
She gazes, and sighs for trouble
At the setting of the sun.

The performance is old as the ages !
Thou sorrowest, daughter, in vain :
He dies every night on the billow
To rise in the morning again.

‘MIT SCHWARZEN SEGELN’

With black wings spread my vessel flies
Far over the troubled sea ;
Thou knowest I am sick at heart,
And still thou grievest me.

Thy heart is faithless as the wind
That ever will be free :
With black wings spread my vessel flies
Far over the troubled sea.

‘WIE SCHANDLICH DU
GEHANDELT’

I HIDE from mankind only
What I have borne from thee,
And tell it to the fishes
Far-faring on the sea.

Upon the dry land only
You may cherish your good name :
A world of waves is playing
With the story of your shame.

‘DAS MEER ERSTRAHLT IM
SONNENSCHIN’

THE sea in the golden sunshine
Herself might golden be ;
My brothers, when I come to die,
Oh ! bury me in the sea.

The ocean's measured lapse and swell
Was ever dear to me ;
Oft has it cooled my passion ;
Ah ! old-time friends are we.

‘ICH HALTE IHR DIE AUGEN
ZU’

I HELD her eyes and kissed her,
And kissed her mouth the while :
Now must she try unceasingly
My reason to beguile.

From closing night to morning light
With ever some new wile :—
‘What need to hold my eyes, love,
To kiss my mouth the while ?’

I answer not—no skill I’ve got
These things to reconcile :—
I held her eyes and kissed her,
And kissed her mouth the while.

WO ?

WHERE shall one all travel-weary
 Courting rest at last recline ?
In the south beneath a palm-tree ?
 Under lindens by the Rhine ?

Shall I lie upon the desert,
 Covered by a stranger's hand ?
Or find resting where the billows
 Sweep an undiscovered strand ?

Onwards ever. Heaven hanging
 His pall about me—there as here :
While, for torches, stars at midnight
 Overhead are burning clear.

POSTSCRIPT
IN PRAISE OF ROBERT BURNS



IN PRAISE OF ROBERT BURNS

‘I could write a capital satire on the world on the back of that Bible ; but first of all I must think of supplying myself with food.’—LAVENGRO.

My hero Burns is wholly pure at heart ?
His truly rural moral code is not
At one with ours. If urban folks depart
From the strait gate of virtue, they have got

None but themselves to blame for it : one
learns

So very young so nicely what to hide !
My lady friend who looks askant at Burns
Remarks that Mrs. Grundy’s skirts are wide ;

And Mrs. Grundy says that sex asserts
Itself so often, in the strangest ways,
She is obliged to wear the fullest skirts
To screen her darlings from the public gaze.

The modern garb effectually conceals
 The form of woman. How on earth she
 goes,
 A little tipsy pyramid on wheels,
 About her daily business, goodness knows.

It was against monstrosities like these
 That Carlyle's far-resounding bolts were
 hurled :
 We live and move (in clothes but half at
 ease)
 And have our Being in a ' naked world.'

I say again that I in Burns delight,
 I mean to make his life and work the text
 Of some eight hundred verses : I shall write
 Of all within my knowledge that has vexed

The souls of workers in this land of ours.
 I say at once, to make my meaning plain,
 When we have killed the filthy beast that
 glowers
 On all our doings, Love will breathe again :

And not till then. I do not mention names :
 The animal in question is of course

No stranger to us : when the Devil claims
His own, we shall without the least remorse

Abandon him, and tell him he may go
To Blazes with his beastly money-bags,
And learn to play with bosom friends
below

The game called 'Retribution' when Time
flags.

So much for the god Mammon. To return :
I've written so far, you will understand,
By way of practice : if I want to earn
A living by it, I must lick the hand

Of some one high in office—some one hired
To make the business of a paper pay.
(The trick of self-effacement once acquired
One never loses, its professors say.)

If God indeed helps those who help them-
selves,
He must have lost all sense of Right and
Wrong—
While under His direction Adam delves,
No Child of Nature will attempt a song.

If in ten dozen books of verse that claim
To be called poetry you find
But one pure song deserving of the name,
Then take the writer in your arms and
 blind

Him with fond kisses. On that fateful day
Talk not of money, lest you do him wrong.
Put up your purse. Let Love in his own
 way
Do honour to the singer and the song.





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NOV 5 1980

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